

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

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R 271030Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7419

INFO MAMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 9984

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE KATHMANDU 2686

E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: PFOR, EAID, UR, NP

SUBJ: NEPAL VISIT OF SOVIET DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER

1. SOVIET DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER FIRYUBIN AND HIS ENTRORAGE DEPARTED NEPAL MAY 25 AFTER A FIVE DAY OFFICIAL VISIT FOR DISCUSSIONS WHICH CENTERED MAINLY AROUND TRADE AND SOVIET ECONOMIC AID TO NEPAL. IN ADDITION TO THE FORMAL TALKS, HEADED ON THE NEPALESE SIDE BY FOREIGN MINISTER ARYAL, FIRYUBIN ALSO CALLED ON THE KING AND THE PRIME MINISTER.

2. EVIDENTLY NOTHING VERY CONCRETE RESULTED FROM THE DISCUSSIONS. THE QUESTION OF A SIGNIFICANT RENEWAL OF SOVIET PROJECT AID TO NEPAL HAS BEEN STALLED FOR SEVERAL YEARS, CHIEFLY OVER DIFFERENCES AS TO THE TERMS OF AID. THE NEPALESE CONTINUE TO FISH FOR GRANT AID WHILE THE SOVIETS OFFER ONLY LOANS ON TERMS WHICH - LAT LEAST IN COMPARISON TO WHAT THE NEPALESE ARE USED TO - SMACK MORE OF COMMERCIAL CREDITS THAN OF AID. THE FIRYUBIN VISIT CONTRIBUTED NOTHING TO NARROWING THESE DIFFERENCES. (A SERIES OF SOVIET FEASIBILITY STUDY TEAM VISITS FOR VARIOUS INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS DID DEVELOP FROM THE KING'S MOSCOW VISIT LAST FALL, BUT THE FIRYUBIN TALKS DO NOT APPEAR TO HAVE ENLARGED ON THAT ACTIVITY.) THE TALKS

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ALSO COVERED THE EXPANSION OF TRADE BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. THE SOVIET UNION PRESENTLY SUPPLIES VIRTUALLY ALL OF NEPAL'S PETROLEUM - SOME \$16 - 18 MILLION PER YEAR, WHILE TAKING ONLY A FEW HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS WORTH OF ODDS AND ENDS (CHIEFLY RAW JUTE) FROM NEPAL. THE NEPALESE REQUESTED INCREASED SOVIET PURCHASES OF JUTE, AS WELL AS OF LINSEED OIL, TEA, AND TIMBER. A NEPALESE TEMAWILL DEPART FOR MOSCOW IN EARLY JUNE TO FOLLOW-UP

ON THESE TRADE POSSIBILITIES.

3. GON FOREIGN SECRETARY BHATT ON MAY 26 TOLD THE CHARGE THAT THE SOVIETS HAD SUGGESTED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A FORMAL COMMISSION TO DISCUSS TRADE AND AID ON A REGULARIZED BASIS, BUT THE NEPAL PREFERRED TO STARY WITH AD-HOC CONSULTATONS AS APPROPRIATE. BHATT SAID THAT FIRYUBIN SEEMED HOPEFUL THAT CLOSE RELATIONS WITH INDIA WOULD CONTINUE, BUT SAID THAT THERE WAS NO IMPROVEMENT IN SOVIET-CHINESE RELATIONS. BHATT ALSO MENTIONED THAT THE SOVIETS DID NOT RAISE THEIR ASIAN PEACE ZONE PROPOSAL.

4. IN A CONVERSATION WITH SOVIET AMBASSADOR UDYMYAN, UDUMYAN ALSO GAVE

THE CHARGE THE IMPRESSION THAT NOTHING SUBSTANTIAL WAS ACCOMPLISHED BY THE VISIT. HE SAID THAT THE PROFERRED SOVIET LOAN TERMS ARE "EASY" BUT THAT THEY WERE NOT PUSING NEPAL TO ACCEPT THEM. ON TRADE, HE SAID THAT THE SOVIET UNION MIGHT BE ABLE TO TAKE SOME LINSEED OIL AND SOME ADDITIONAL JUTE, BUT WERE NOT ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE POTENTIAL FOR OTHER COMMODITIES. IN THE CASE OF TEA, FOR EXAMPLE, NEPAL COULD ONLY OFFER ABOUT 10,000 TONS, HARDLY ENOUGH TO MAKE IT WORTH THE TROUBLE.

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